

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HOEVEN ANNOUNCES FORMER NO-MOW LAND AVAILABLE, ROAD RESTRICTIONS LIFTED TO HELP MOVE HAY

BISMARCK, N.D. – Gov. John Hoeven today announced that the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) has made former no-mow areas on portions of the state highway system available for mowing. In addition, a truck weight-restriction waiver has been authorized for hay transportation to help farmers experiencing hay shortages due to drought conditions.

“We are moving on a number of fronts to mitigate the effects of dry weather on crops, and one way we are doing that is by making additional feed stock available to ranchers,” Hoeven said. “This, combined with our efforts to open Conservation Reserve Program lands and other measures, can help our producers in affected areas get through this difficult period.”

“We would like to remind farmers and ranchers that approximately 8,200 acres within No Mow rights-of-way were officially eliminated this spring and are now available for haying,” said David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota Department of Transportation Director.

The former no-mow areas are located along sections of the following highways:

- Highway 50 near Grenora.
- Highway 2 near Williston, Stanley and along the highway corridor throughout McHenry, Pierce,
- Ramsey, Nelson and Grand Forks counties.
- Highway 83 near Wilton and Max.
- Highway 281 near Sheyenne and Churches Ferry.
- Highway 13 near Gwinner.

“Some of the areas have recently been mowed by adjacent land owners and NDDOT, but some acres are still available for haying,” said Sprynczynatyk. Farmers and ranchers can contact the local NDDOT District office to find out what areas are still available.

In addition, due to drought conditions resulting in hay shortages in southwestern North Dakota, NDDOT has authorized a road restriction waiver on length and weight of trucks for hay movements only on currently posted routes with gross vehicle weight (GVW) restrictions. The posted routes include sections of Highways 1804, 1806, 13, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 30. The waiver is effective July 7 to November 1, 2006:

1. Routes restricted to 75 feet in overall length are temporarily increased to 95 feet.
2. Routes posted for 80,000 pounds GVW are temporarily increased to 105,500 pounds. All axle weights must be legal.

All North Dakota Highway Patrol rules, regulations, and laws must be complied with. A \$50 seasonal permit or \$20 single trip permit must be purchased for oversize hay movement. The permit allows a carrier hauling hay using a truck-tractor semi-trailer vehicle configuration to be 12 feet in width, and 15 feet in height. Loads must be marked with 12x12" red or bright orange flags. An 18x84" Oversize Load sign is required when the overall length exceeds 75 feet. Movements must be made between Sunrise and Sunset.

Carriers traveling on the interstate system over 80,000 pounds GVW must purchase single trip interstate permits, as well as the seasonal permit. The fee for a single trip interstate permit is \$10. All axle weights must be legal. All federal motor carrier safety regulations relating to movements on the North Dakota state highway system must also be complied with.

For more information on mowing areas, contact the NDDOT district office in your area:

Bismarck District 328-6950
Devils Lake District 665-5100
Dickinson District 227-6500
Fargo District 239-8900
Grand Forks District 787-6500
Minot District 837-7625
Valley City District 845-8800
Williston District 774-2700

Additional steps the Governor has taken to assist affected farmers and ranchers include the following:

- **Declared Agriculture Drought Emergency:** Declared a drought disaster emergency, which triggers the State Water Commission's (SWC) Livestock Water

Supply Assistance Program to help with the cost of creating permanent water supplies for cattle.

- **Reactivated Bank of North Dakota Programs:** Asked officials of the Bank of North Dakota to begin the process of extending the Farm Disaster Relief Program, and reinstitute the Business Disaster Relief Program.
- **CRP Land:** Requested Sec. Johanns open CRP land, including CP-23 areas statewide.
- **Emergency Conservation Program:** Requested that Sec. Johanns reallocate Emergency Conservation Program funds for qualifying counties in North Dakota.
- **DARs:** Requested USDA Farm Service Agency to complete Damage Assessment Reports as soon as feasible.
- **Activated Agriculture Working Group:** Activated Agriculture Working Group of the Drought Task Force within the State Emergency Operations Plan.
- **Declared Fire Emergency:** The executive order applies statewide, but according to the county by county fire danger index, restrictions apply only to counties in either the “Very High” or “Extreme” fire danger categories.
- **Opened Former No-Mow Areas:** Directed DOT to open former no-mow acres to haying – approximately 6,800 acres. (Confirm this.)
- **Adjusted Road Load Limits:** Directed DOT to adjust road load limits and width and length restrictions to accommodate the transportation of hay to drought areas.
- **Open Public Lands to Haying:** Ensured that North Dakota Parks and Recreation, Game & Fish, and Land Management Departments to identify and make available public lands to haying for drought affected producers. (They do this annually.)
- **NDSU Extension FeedList:** Producers are reminded that the Extension Service maintains an ongoing feed list to connect ranchers in need of hay with producers who have available feed. It can be accessed at <http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/feedlist/>.
- **Enlisted Support of Regional Governors:** Organized a request to Congress by the Western Governors Association and the Midwestern Governors Association to support disaster funding legislation.

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